

Intermontanus

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Announcements

It's that time of year again when memberships need to be renewed. This year we have several new membership categories for you to choose from. Basic dues for an individual remain \$8.00, however non-USA members are asked to pay \$16.00 to cover the extra postage costs. Family memberships are now available for \$12.00. Individuals may also choose to become a Sustaining member (\$16.00) or a Contributing member (\$25.00).

Once again we are planning on printing a membership directory for 1996. You will only be listed in the directory if you return the enclosed membership form and indicate that you wish to be included. Members who have already paid their 1996 dues will also need to return the membership form to be included in the directory.

New Publications

The Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles has announced two publications. The first is a facsimile reprint of the book *The Lizards of Australia and New Zealand* by John E. Gray and Albert Gunther, and includes an introduction by Glenn M. Shea. This book represents the first monograph dealing exclusively with the herpetofauna of Australia and New Zealand. It consists of two separate but related works that share the same set of plates. The first of these, by Gray and Gunther, was issued in two sections (1845, 1875), as part of the scientific results of the voyage of H.M.S. *Erebus* and *Terror*, commanded by Captain Sir James Ross Clark, and sent by the British Admiralty during 1839–1843 to determine the limits of Antarctica and to explore Australia and New Zealand. This was the first comprehensive review of the lizards of Australia and New Zealand and gave the scientific name, synonymy, description, and distribution of each species. Many new species were described for the first time. The second work being reprinted in this volume is Gray's monograph, "The Lizards of Australia and New Zealand in the Collection of the British Museum" (1867), which was also a checklist containing the basic details for each species.

One outstanding feature of this reprint is the 20 lithographic plates, drawn by G.H. Ford, staff artist at the British Museum and one of the best natural history artists of the 19th century. These plates illustrate monitors (4 plates), pygopodids (1), geckos (3), skinks (9), agamids (2), and one of the tuatara, which was then classified as an agamid lizard. These exquisite illustrations are among the most detailed and lifelike ever produced on the Australian and New Zealand herpetofaunas. They represent the first published illustrations of many of these species, including the tuatara. Half of the plates illustrate single animals in natural poses, whereas each of the other plates have as many as 15 figures. Specifications: 80 pages, 20 full-size plates. Format 8 1/2 x 11 inches (21.5 x 28 cm). Clothbound, \$20 plus postage.

The second book is titled *Contributions to West Indian Herpetology* edited by Robert Powell and Robert W. Henderson with a foreword by Thomas W. Schoener. This new book (with contributions by 59 authors from the United States, Europe, and the West Indies) provides an introduction to Antillean herpetology, including a history of West Indian herpetology, an updated checklist

of the herpetofauna (including full literature citations for the original descriptions of all 622 species), and a section of color plates illustrating representatives of all genera of native West Indian amphibians and reptiles. Also included are papers providing a broad view of current herpetological research in the West Indies (with a strong emphasis on field-oriented projects). All research chapters are abstracted in English, Spanish, and French.

Specifications: 460 pages, 28 black-and-white photographs, numerous figures, 8 color plates (70 photographs), index to scientific names. Format 8 1/2 x 11 inches (21.5 x 28 cm). Clothbound. To be issued March 1996. \$60, or \$40 for SSAR members before publication, add \$2.00 shipping (\$4.00 non-USA)

Send orders to: Robert D. Aldridge, SSAR Publications Secretary, Department of Biology, St. Louis University, 3507 Laclede Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri 63103, USA (Telephone: area code 314, 977-3910 or -3916; fax: 314, 977-3658; e-mail: SSAR@sluvcu.slu.edu). Make checks payable to "SSAR." Overseas orders must be paid in USA funds using a draft drawn on American banks (include an additional amount to cover bank conversion charges) or by International Money Order. All persons may charge orders to MasterCard or VISA (please provide account number and expiration date). Details concerning membership in SSAR and a complete list of Society publications can be obtained on request to Dr. Aldridge.

Facts on File recently published the book *The Encyclopedia of Snakes* by Chris Mattison. The book contains ten chapters: The origin and evolution of snakes, morphology and function, how snakes live, where snakes live, feeding, defence, reproduction, snakes and humans, taxonomy, and the classification of snakes. The final chapter includes brief descriptions of nearly all snake genera. Well illustrated with beautiful color photographs and several figures; 256 pages, \$35.00. See review on page 45.

Reptile & Amphibian Magazine recently completed their new book entitled *A Complete Guide to Scientific and Common Names of Reptiles and Amphibians of the World* by Norman Frank and Erica Ramus. The book is divided into three parts: an index to genera, a list of species in taxonomic order, and an index to common names. The book costs \$19.95 + \$3.00 s/h and can be ordered from Reptile & Amphibian Magazine, RD 3, Box 3709-A, Pottsville, PA 17901.

The Asociación Venezolana De Herpetología (Venezuelan Association of Herpetologists, AVH) has started publishing a newsletter entitled *Herpetonoticas*. The newsletter contains articles, notes, and announcements of interest to both researchers and keepers of reptiles and amphibians. The AVH welcomes contributions from anyone interested in herpetology, particularly of South America. For more information about the society write: Asociación Venezolana De Herpetología, Apartado de Correo 567, Valencia 2001/A, Venezuela.

Herp Art

The *Windows on Evolution* series is the first collection of fine art prints by the renowned wildlife artist, *Carel Pieter Brest van Kempen*. Advanced Vivarium Systems, Inc. is proud to announce the release of these extraordinary, limited edition (only 300 available), signed and numbered fine art prints. Experience the spectacular beauty of these "windows on evolution" and enjoy enchanting glimpses

of the natural world in your home or office.

Currently three prints are available: "Optimism" \$175.00, "Instant of Opportunity" \$250.00 (this was featured on the cover of *The Vivarium* 7(2)), and "A Question of Timing" \$250.00. Shipping and handling is not included in the price of the prints. Two of the prints are available in a set of note cards for \$15.95 + S/H.

For more information write Advanced Vivarium Systems, Inc., 10728 Prospect Ave., Suite G, Santee, CA 92071, USA, phone 619-258-2629, fax 619-258-7262.

Curiosity Corner

BRUMATION OF COLUBRIDS

Stan Draper

It's that time of year when those of us who want to breed our rat snakes, kingsnakes and other colubrids need to start thinking about cooling our animals down. In some circles this is called hibernation and in others, brumation. Because the animals are not truly hibernating, I believe the correct term to be brumation.

The first thing to check is the condition of the animals being considered for breeding next year. Are they old enough and or big enough? Generally two years of age is the minimum for considering an animal for procreation. If old enough, then is the animal in good physical health? Brumation is taxing on an animal. They must live

off of fat reserves and cannot fight off infection or disease very well when below the optimum temperature. Breeders can even be slightly on the heavy side when being cooled down. Don't forget any extreme can be bad.

The next thing to do before putting the animals down is to quit feeding them at least ten days to two weeks beforehand. The gut must be totally empty so that there will be nothing to putrefy. Remember snakes rely on temperature to help digestion. Also if an animal is in its "blue" phase, you will want to wait for it to complete the cycle and shed before cooling it down. Some snakes will shed during brumation. I have never had a problem with mine when they did this. Just remember to check them just as you would in the summer for eye-caps and other unshed skin.

While you are waiting the two weeks after the last feeding, you can get your hibernaculum area ready. Choose a place in your place of residence where you can keep the temperature at a fairly constant low level. Most of the more temperate colubrids require a temperature of at least 55 degrees Fahrenheit, but no lower than 45 degrees Fahrenheit (13-7.5 degrees Celsius). Some of the colubrids from regions nearer the equator should be cooled down no further than 60 degrees Fahrenheit (15.5 degrees Celsius).

I use a corner of my basement with a window in it. I tarp off an area from floor to ceiling and include some shelving. I then open the window a small amount and with the aid of a remote sensor thermometer adjust the opening to the point where it keeps the hibernaculum within the range needed. This setup is used for the majority of snakes. For the rest, I use another room where the temperature does not usually get lower than 60 degrees Fahrenheit.

Now that you have your area ready to accept your animals and

Utah Association of Herpetologists

Intermontanus

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Contributing: \$25.00

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Everyone is invited to contribute to *Intermontanus*. Articles, notes, essays, book reviews, and other submissions should be type written or on computer disk (Macintosh or PC). However, hand written articles will be accepted from individuals who do not have access to computers or typewriters.

Advertisements

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Bibliomania!

Recent additions:

de Vosjoli (1995) **Basic Care of Uromastix**\$5.00
de Vosjoli (1995) **Basic Care of Rough Green Snakes Including Notes on the Care of Brown Snakes and Ringneck Snakes**\$5.00

Frank and Ramus (1995) **A Complete Guide to Scientific and Common Names of Reptiles and Amphibians of the World**\$19.95

Henkel & Schmidt (1995) **Geckoes**\$44.00
Mattison (1995) **The Encyclopedia of Snakes**\$35.00

Pérez-Higareda and Smith (1991) **Ofidiofauna de Veracruz Análisis Taxonómico y Zoogeográfico. Ophidiofauna of Veracruz Taxonomic and Zoogeographical Analysis In Spanish and English**\$32.00

Ramírez-Bautista (1994) **Manual y Claves Ilustradas de los Anfibios y Retpiles de la Región de Chamela, Jalisco, México** 1 copy left\$40.00

Used Books (single copy of each available)

Duellman & Trueb (1994) **Biology of Amphibians**\$34.00

Lutz & Lutz (1973) **Brazilian Species of Hyla**\$29.00

Palmer (1992) **Landscape with Reptile: Rattlesnakes in an Urban World**\$10.00

Ubertazzi Tanara (1975) **The World of Amphibians and Reptiles**\$12.50

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the two week waiting period is over it is time to move the animals. The cages or containers in which the animals will spend their "winter" should have a substrate in which they can burrow if and or when they desire. Some of the more commonly used substances are shredded paper, aspen shavings and ground up corncob. I prefer the aspen shavings but have also used shredded paper with good results. There should also be a container for water that is as tip resistant as possible. The animals will drink during this cool period and I have even seen them soak. They stay amazingly active. A couple of mine even turn more defensive during this time, occasionally striking and biting when checked on.

You can now place the animals in the hibernaculum. There is no need to gradually do this. The hard part now is to wait for spring.

The minimum period for cooling is about three months. Some animals do require longer periods to have success in breeding the next year. You do need to check on the animals throughout the cool period to make sure they still have water available and that they have not turned the water bowl over. If this happens replace the substrate as soon as possible and try to secure the bowl better. Try not to disturb them any more than is necessary and keep it as dark as possible. Do not be surprised if you get bitten by an animal that has never even struck at you before. It is just protecting itself in a compromised situation.

In a later newsletter, I will go into the process of warming these animals back to their optimum range of temperature.

Research Update

NEW FOSSIL LIZARD FROM UTAH

Its not very often that reptile fossils from Utah are described in herpetological journals, but Cifelli and Nydam recently described an early Cretaceous platynotan from central Utah. Platynotans are lizards, much like varanids and helodermatids. The Utah specimen represents an important find both as a unique taxonomic specimen and for its age. The complete citation and abstract for the article are:

Cifelli, Richard L. and Randall L. Nydam. 1995. Primitive, Helodermatid-like Platynotan from the Early Cretaceous of Utah. *Herpetologica* 51(3):286-291.

Abstract— We describe an advanced anguimorph lizard from the Albian (Early Cretaceous) of Utah. The taxon lacks at least one important feature (retracted nares) of Varanoidea, and for this reason is referred to the Necrosauridae, a fossil group characterized

by a combination of anguoid and varanoid characters. Nonetheless, the fossil bears several advanced characters (such as widely-spaced, trenchant, plicidentine, marginal teeth lacking replacement pits) suggesting relationship to Varanoidea, and others (form of the maxilla, suggesting a blunt, rounded snout; osteoderm pattern and ornamentation) reminiscent of Helodermatidae; the closest comparison is with Late Cretaceous Paraderma, which represents the first record of that family. Regardless of specific affinities, the unnamed taxon represents the earliest occurrence of terrestrial Platynota partly occluding a major gap in the fossil record of lizards, and documents the presence of this group of highly predaceous squamates in The Early Cretaceous of North America. Like living varanoids, especially helodermatids, the taxon from Utah may have included relatively large prey in its diet.

View Point

COMMON NAME? TO WHO?

Breck Bartholomew

I recently received a copy of Reptile & Amphibian Magazine's new book *A Complete Guide to Scientific and Common Names of Reptiles and Amphibians of the World*. While I am not prepared to offer a review, I do have one criticism that I would like to voice about this book as well as several others like it. Basically my criticism can be summarized by the question: Who ever said each animal has one unique common name?

I am not certain when it started, but for years now there have been lists of standard common and scientific names for reptiles and amphibians of North America. The most recent of these lists was compiled by Collins in 1990. If you look up familiar species in this list you will find that each species has both a unique scientific name and a unique common name. Furthermore the common names are often unfamiliar. For example, growing up in Utah I used to catch Coluber constrictor mormon, a snake known by three common names: blue racer, Mormon racer, and green racer. The standard common name, however, is the Western yellowbelly racer, a name I NEVER heard while growing up.

Another good example is the Great Basin gopher snake, *Pituophis melanoleucus deserticola*. Whenever I teach a class about local herps,

or talk to locals about snakes and I mention the Great Basin gopher snake I get a strange look. It is almost as if they are saying, "You're off your rocker. That snake isn't around here." But when I say Blow snake, gopher snake, or bull snake everyone knows what I am talking about. So who decided what the standard common name was???

Now you would think if there is a single standard common name for each species it would stay the same regardless of what happens to the scientific name, but this isn't the case. When the Pacific tree frog was changed from *Hyla regilla* to *Pseudacris regilla* it's common name was changed to Pacific chorus frog; as if the local folks know the genus has been changed! Unfortunately this is not the only change. Ten years ago the Western yellowbelly racer had the common name Western yellow-bellied racer. In the mean time someone decided that the suffix -ed was not appropriate for common names and changed all of them.

The new book by Reptile & Amphibian Magazine has assigned unique common names to every species of amphibian and reptile. My guess is the authors had to make up common names for several species as I know many of them are so uncommon or "new" that

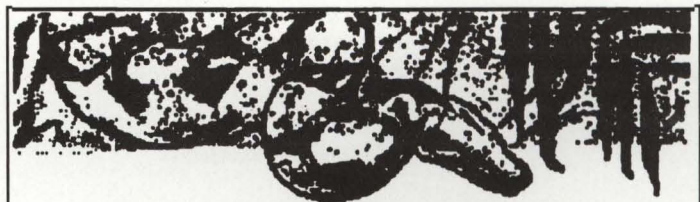
they do not have common names.

I would really like to know why each species must have a unique common name? What is wrong with following the "locals" in calling all *Sceloporus* and *Uta* Blue-bellies, swifts, or fence lizards? If you need a unique name for communication then use the scientific name. Common names should be left as they are; common. Suppose you are using the checklist to determine the scientific name of a species for which you know the local or common name. The checklist should list all the species known by that common name, even if this means 30 species are listed. In many cases the animal may not have a common name and its scientific name is its only name. Why can't scientific names be common too?

Having a unique common name for each species offers a false sense of stability. It also contradicts the whole idea of common names. An individual cannot decide what the common name for a species is going to be. Especially when the individual is in the US and the species are in Africa, South America, or elsewhere. This appears to be what Frank and Ramus have done in their new book, *A Complete Guide to Scientific and Common Names of Reptiles and Amphibians of the World*.

Literature Cited

- Collins, J.T. 1990. Standard Common and Current Scientific Names for North American Amphibians and Reptiles. SSAR, Lawrence, KS. 41 pp.
- Frank, N. and E. Ramus. 1995. A Complete Guide to Scientific and Common Names of Reptiles and Amphibians of the World. N. G. Publishing, Pottsville, Pennsylvania. 377 pp.



Reptile Gardens

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THE IMPORTANCE OF FULL SPECTRUM LIGHTING

Eric Peterson

In the wild, animals are exposed to a variety of climatic changes. Some days it rains, other days the sun beats on the ground. To most animals this change in weather means nothing more than a change in the temperature. However, to ectothermic animals like reptiles, this change can make or break a day, especially to diurnal lizards which rely on the full spectrum rays of the sun. The sun converts food into vitamins essential for healthy growth. Not all people are aware that in captivity, full spectrum light is strongly recommended and/or essential to keeping happy and healthy lizards.

This story is about two female chuckwallas (*Sauromalus obesus*) named Thelma and Louise. They hatched at Utah's Hogle Zoo in September of 1990, and I began taking care of them in September of 1994. These two particular specimens were very small in comparison to the other chuckwallas from the same clutch. They were being kept in a fifty-five gallon tank with a red heat lamp. Their diet mainly consisted of chopped spinach and kale with grated carrot. The basking areas in the enclosure were minimal at best. The first change I made was to position a branch extending diagonally up the tank. This gave

the lizards an area to bask where temperatures would reach well over 100° F. On November 26, 1994, a base weight was taken for Thelma and Louise. On January 11, 1995, I placed a Sylvania fluorescent light at the top of the enclosure next to the basking branch.

Table 1 documents their weights from January 11, 1995 to June 25, 1995.

Table 1. Weights of two, five-year-old *Sauromalus obesus* named Thelma and Louise after a full spectrum light was installed in their cage. All weights are in grams.

Date	Thelma	Gain/Loss	Louise	Gain/Loss
1/11/95	105.5	—	125.6	—
1/20/95	116.5	+11.0	179.5	+53.9
1/31/95	124.6	+8.1	179.4	-0.1
2/6/95	134.4	+10.2	187.9	+8.5
3/1/95	158.5	+24.1	210.0	+22.1
3/17/95	169.5	+11.0	227.4	+17.4
4/11/95	181.0	+11.5	240.0	+12.6
5/5/95	206.0	+25.0	238.6	-1.4
6/25/95	204.5	-1.5	251.0	+13.0
Totals		+99.0		+125.4

Some would say that this weight gain is seasonal, but they have maintained the weight as shown on June 25, 1995. They are five-years old, so normal juvenile growth at this rate should have peaked before now. Some dietary changes were made, such as adding flower petals and occasionally melon to daily feedings. No changes were made in the amount of food offered.

I am convinced that the installation of a full spectrum light was the reason for their rate of growth. The dark and foggy life that Thelma and Louise were accustomed to was replaced with a purer and more natural light. They are now enjoying a life brighter than ever in the Discovery Center at Utah's Hogle Zoo.

BOOK REVIEW: THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SNAKES

by Chris Mattison. 1995. Facts on File, New York, 256 pp. Hardcover, US \$35.00. ISBN 0-8160-3072-3

Stan Draper

When first I saw this large sized book and just leafed through it, I thought the herpetocultural library might have another fine addition.

Before reading anything, I just paged through the entire volume and was very impressed with the quality and quantity of photographs and drawings. There are quite a few photographs of rare and unusual species. Even the photographs of the more commonly kept species are fresh and nicely done. The captions with the drawings and photographs are well placed and informative.

It was when I got to the text that I started having doubts. Ignoring the fact that the author uses British spellings (book was first published in the UK), I knew the book was in trouble when the author mentioned the "body and soul" of snakes. Anthropomorphism has no place in an "Encyclopedia of Snakes." From there on, it became obvious that the text was lacking.

The majority of the errors that I will mention here were in the part on snakes in captivity. It is probably true that temperature is a more important factor for breeding than lighting. But to say that daylight plays no part in reproduction is an over simplification to say the least. Some of the more difficult or yet to be bred species of snakes will undoubtedly prove this generalization wrong.

The next item that astounded me was the recommendation of manually everting the hemipenis instead of probing especially on hatchlings. The reason the author gave for this was fear of injuring the animal. In my humble opinion, putting enough pressure with a large finger or thumb to evert a tiny hemipenis is more likely to injure than is probing when done by an inexperienced person. Having probed hundreds of hatchling rat snakes and milksnakes with no problems, I have to strongly disagree with this practice. Either practice done by someone who has not been properly instructed by another person can surely cause permanent damage.

Salt Lake City, UT

I realize that this volume cannot be all things to all people, but if a subject is mentioned, it should be discussed completely or at least some references given as to where to find more information. In the sections about conditioning and mating, to lightly gloss over the cooling down and rewarming of the animals in question, is irresponsible even with the disclaimer at the beginning of the chapter that this is just an overview of snakes in captivity.

Another section of this same chapter, headed incubation and hatching, is full of misinformation. This is surely a good example of too little information being very harmful.

The bibliography, broken into several general subjects, lists only two books under "Snakes in Captivity" and one of these is by this same author. There is a note that there are more books available on the subject but there is not room to list them all. Amazingly, there is four inches of blank page below this note. Do you think maybe six to eight top quality books by OTHER authors could have been listed in this space??

The last glaring error that I will bring up is one about taxonomic names and spelling. I am by no means well versed in this area, but I do know that for several years the accepted spelling for the species name of the common kingsnake is *getula* not *getulus*. This is found throughout the book not just in a place or two. I am sure that someone with a better understanding of this topic would find other mistakes.

I cannot recommend this book on the single reason of its illustrations. When a tome is entitled "encyclopedia," I expect more than cursory information and interesting tidbits about studies done recently. The subject of snakes is just too large and diverse to be contained in one volume and done with any degree of encyclopedic accuracy. There is some accurate and useful information contained within the covers but it can be found in other texts.

Classified Ads:

For Sale: Captive born tangerine Honduran milk snakes, *Lampropeltis tigrinum hondurensis*. Available now. Call Hans (801) 673-6149.

For Sale: Mouse cages and racks made by Mouse Condo. Single cages are \$15 ea. or \$25 for two. Both two and three cage racks are available (\$30 and \$40 respectively). The rack systems are stackable and have tubs that can be cleaned without removing the water bottle. For more information call Breck (801) 752-0297.

For Sale: Breeding pair of coastal rosy boas, *Lichanura trivirgata roseofusca*. This pair has produced 11 babies over the last two years. Why wait three years to start breeding? Asking \$400, call Breck (801) 752-0297.

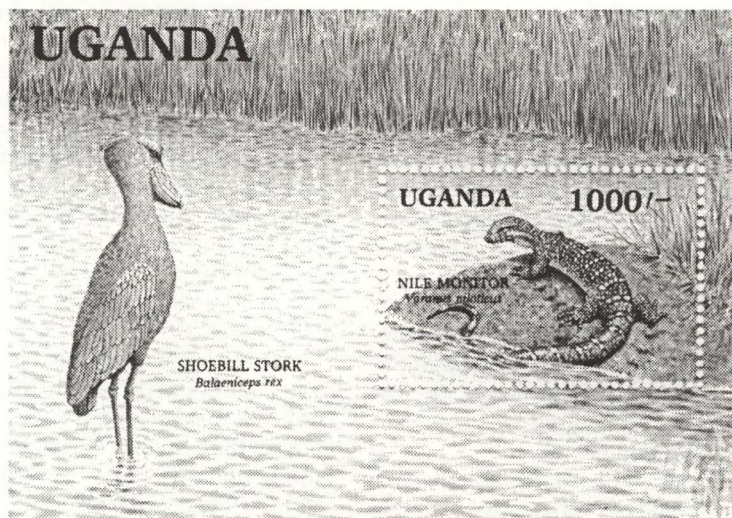
Reptiles Magazine Indexed: Locate every reference in Reptiles Magazine from the beginning. Every species mentioned, where the photos are. English and Latin names. Updated Monthly. Single issue \$5.00, full year subscription (4 issues, sent quarterly) \$18.00. Send Check or Money Order to Reptile Index, 7354 Cardigan Circle, Atlanta, GA 30328/404-396-4414.

Wanted: Reptiles and amphibians for use in a high school classroom. I will be happy to pick the animals up if I can use them in my classroom. If you have an animals to donate call or write Ron Call, Richfield High School, 510 West 100 South, Richfield, UT 84701, (801) 527-3477.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF HERPETOCULTURISTS. A nonprofit national membership organization of herpetoculturists, veterinarians, academicians, and zoo personnel involved in the captive husbandry and propagation of amphibians and reptiles. Membership includes the highly acclaimed *The Vivarium* magazine, dedicated to the dissemination of information on herpetocultural accomplishments, herpetological medicine, breeding & maintenance, field studies and adventures, enclosure design and much more. Membership in the AFH is \$26.00. Send information requests to, AFH-News, PO Box 300067, Escondido, CA 92030-0067.

Herp Quest Presents - The Natural History of the Sea of Cortez with Philippe de Vosjoli and Chris Wood. Join us May 11-18 as we travel aboard the 105 ft. *Captin Villegas* studying, observing and photographing unique insular herpetofauna, as well as the plethora of birds and marine life found in the stunning 'Midriff' region of Mexico's Sea of Cortez. \$825.00 includes boat, meals and all accommodations. For registration or a free brochure contact: Herp Quest, 326 N. Indiana Ave., Vista, CA 92084 (619) 630-3058. ⁵⁽¹⁾

Next Meeting: Thursday November 16, 1995 at 7:00 pm in room 140 of the U of U James Talmage Building (JTB). This building is directly north of the Biology building and will become our regular meeting location. **Lara Carroll** will present a talk entitled **Facts, Folklore, & Fanged Frogs: A Portrait of Malaysia**. After the talk there will be a drawing for a copy of the new AVS book on *Uromastix*. Reptile Gardens has donated a baby bearded dragon for the raffle. Please let me know (before the 16th) if you need directions to the meeting location.



This recent Souvenir Sheet issued by Uganda features a Nile Monitor (*Varanus niloticus*) and a Shoebill Stork (*Bataeniceps rex*).

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